

Family Self-Sufficiency News

Summer 2011

Volume 6, Issue 2

Congratulations Terisha!

The County of San Diego's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program has the privilege to encourage and support Section 8 participants in achieving their goals. We are proud to congratulate Terisha, one of our recent graduates, for all of her hard work and accomplishments.



When she was first issued a Section 8 voucher, Terisha had lost her job and was close to becoming homeless. The voucher kept her family off of the streets and gave her the opportunity to look for work.

In 2008, Terisha joined the FSS program. A few years later she found employment as a Wal-Mart Assistant. Shortly after Terisha was hired, her

determination and leadership abilities were recognized. As a result, she has received more managerial responsibility, and continues to climb the corporate ladder towards a successful career in management.

In January 2011, Terisha came full circle when she was given a raise and no longer needed Section 8 to cover a portion of her rent. She is now independent from all forms of government assistance, and has achieved true self-sufficiency. In addition to gaining economic independence, she accrued over \$8000 in her escrow account and completed her goals more than two years before the end of her FSS contract.

We are pleased to have had the opportunity to work with Terisha and her family, and wish her the best!

If you have completed your goals or would like to change them, we would love to hear from you! Call the FSS Office today at (858) 694-8709.



Quick Announcements

Fall 2011 FSS Scholarships

Will you or someone in your household be attending a college or university, technical school, or vocational school in the Fall of 2011? The County of San Diego's Department of Housing and Community Development is pleased to announce that scholarship applications for the Fall 2011 semester/quarter are now available. Applications are due no later than **July 22, 2011**.

For more entry rules, essay guidelines, or general scholarship information, please contact Sarah Leslie at (858) 694-8717.

Summer Workshop

On Friday, **July 22nd 2011 from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.**, the FSS program will be hosting Money Management International's workshop titled **Ready, Willing and Able**. This workshop will give participants the tools needed to take control of their financial situation and to develop healthy money management skills. This workshop is open to all FSS Participants and members of their household. For more information or to RSVP, please call Michelle Richardson at (858) 694-8709.

Annual Participant Updates

Annual Participant Updates are now due! This quick survey will let us know that progress you have made on your goals and help us locate services that can help you succeed. If you have not turned one in, please contact Sarah Leslie at (858) 694-8717 to complete one today! Updates are also available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2011FSSUpdate>

“What Home Means to Me” Contest

Every year, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) holds a poster contest for children grades K-12 as a part of their *Housing America* campaign, and children of FSS participants are eligible to enter!

The theme of this year's contest is “What Home Means to Me.” **Entries must be submitted to the Family Self Sufficiency Program by August 15, 2011** so we can submit them to the Southern California Judges before they make their selections for the national contest. The Southern California Chapter of NAHRO will select three honorees in each of the three age categories (see application for categories) and submit to the National NAHRO contest.

13 Prizes will be awarded at the national level and are a \$100 savings bond to be awarded to twelve young artists, and a \$500 savings bond and a trip to Washington D.C. for the grand prize winner and his or her family. The trip includes airfare, lodging and a tour of the Capitol!

For your convenience, we've included an application and flier with this newsletter. If multiple children in your household would like to participate and you need more applications, contact our assistant Michelle Richardson at: Michelle.Richardson@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Information about the NAHRO and contest can be found on their website at: www.nahro.org



Pertussis Vaccine Required for Children Entering School

A new school immunization law requires all students entering 7th through 12th grades in the 2011-2012 school year in California to be immunized with a pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine booster called Tdap.



Pertussis is a contagious disease that causes violent coughing fits making it hard to breathe and can last for months. It easily spreads when someone with the disease coughs or sneezes and is particularly dangerous for young babies.

A booster vaccine is needed in addition to the regular young childhood series of shots because vaccine protection diminishes over time. Any immunity developed after having whooping cough disease also wears off, so people who have had whooping cough can get it again.

The new school entry booster dose is not only very important in protecting school age children, but it can also help protect the whole community! When enough people are immunized, it's much less likely that pertussis will spread and infect those who may not have been able to receive the vaccine themselves.

The new requirement affects all students – current, new, and transfers – in public and private schools. The law has two phases:

- For the 2011-2012 school year, all students entering into 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades will need proof of a Tdap shot before starting school.
- For 2012-2013 and future school years, all students entering into 7th grade will need proof of a Tdap shot before starting school

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency urges parents of children who will start 7th-12th grades this fall to get their kids protected now. Parents should contact their children's doctor or other regular source of health care to find out if their children need this vaccine.

If parents wait until later in the summer, there may be no doctor's appointments available or there could be long lines at doctor's offices and clinics. If children don't have proof of immunization with this vaccine, they may not be able to enter school.

To find out more about the new requirement, pertussis, and other immunization topics you can visit the San Diego Immunization Program Website at: <http://www.sdiz.org/> or the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Immunization Branch website at: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/default.aspx>

Article adapted from: sdcountynews.org



Quick and Easy Slow-Cooker Beef Stroganoff

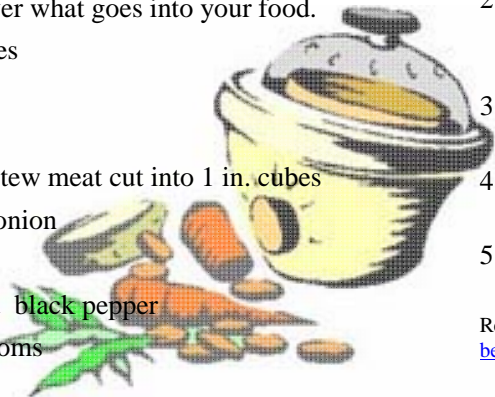
The last thing I want to do when I get home after a long day at work is cook, but eating out can be unhealthy and expensive. So, what's a busy person to do? Cooking meals in a slow cooker can really cut down on the time it takes to get a meal on the table. Just take a few minutes the night before to put the ingredients together. In the morning when you leave for work, simply put the ingredients in the slow cooker, turn it on and come home to a meal ready to eat! It's fast, easy on the wallet and gives you control over what goes into your food.

Prep time: 15 minutes

Serves 6

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds lean beef stew meat cut into 1 in. cubes
- 1 medium chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms



- 1 can low-sodium cream of mushroom soup
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup fat-free sour cream
- 1 bag of dried egg noodles

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients (except the sour cream and egg noodles) into a 4 quart or larger slow cooker and stir.
2. Cover the slow cooker and cook on low for 6 to 8 hours. (You could also cook the meal on high for 3-4 hours)
3. When the stew is ready to be served, add the sour cream until the stew is hot again. (about 3-4 minutes)
4. While the stew is reheating, cook and strain the egg noodles.
5. Serve the stroganoff and egg noodles with your favorite vegetable, and enjoy!

Recipe adapted from: <http://recipes.prevention.com/Recipe/low-fat-crockpot-beef-stroganoff.aspx>



Fair Housing, What it is and Why it Matters

Did you know it is illegal under Federal law to discriminate in housing based on **race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin or familial status**? California law also makes it illegal to discriminate in housing based on **sexual orientation, age, source of income, medical condition** or for other arbitrary reasons. Fair housing is the right to have an equal opportunity to get housing based on your family's ability to pay rent NOT on unjust factors, such as those protected by law. Housing discrimination can happen in many ways other than being denied housing. Other forms include being denied services, being offered different terms or policies, and being denied loans or insurance based on the protected classes previously mentioned.

Housing plays a large role in defining a person's quality of life. Where you live affects your access to many different services and opportunities such as education, transportation, and employment. Housing discrimination is a barrier to housing choice, which limits the opportunities of success for targeted groups. Knowing

your housing rights is important to protecting you and your family from being discriminated against.

In effort to keep you safe, the County of San Diego strives to reduce housing discrimination in the housing rental, sales, lending, and insurance markets. To do this, the County has contracted with North County Lifeline to serve as its Fair Housing Program Administrator. North County Lifeline has created the Fair Housing Collaborative with The Center for Social Advocacy (CSA) and South Bay Community Services (SBCS) to provide fair housing services. Through their joint efforts, these organizations sponsor public fair housing educational activities, fair housing outreach activities, and fair housing referral activities. North County Lifeline's Fair Housing Collaborative also administers and monitors all County fair housing efforts, including the County's Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Program. Contact Kelly Matthews at North County Lifeline for more information.



If you feel your rights have been violated, fair housing complaints can also be filed with HUD by telephone (1-800-669-9777), mail, or via the Internet.

Be aware, stay protected.

J.E. KELLY MATTHEWS

Fair Housing Program Manager

p: 760.842.6226

f: 760.726.6102

toll free: 866.954.3354 x 6226

e: kmatthews@nclifeline.org

200 Michigan Avenue
Vista, CA 92084

www.nclifeline.org



This article contains information from: www.dfeh.ca.gov, www.nclifeline.org, and www.hud.gov

Using CalFresh at Farmers Markets



As summer goes into full swing in San Diego, a staggering amount of fresh Californian produce will hit the shelves of grocery stores and farmers markets. While CalFresh (formerly food stamps) can be used to purchase healthy foods at local supermarkets, four San Diego farmers markets are taking an initiative to make their fresh and local produce easily accessible to low income families.

According to the San Diego County Farm Bureau, the four farmers markets in San Diego County that currently accept CalFresh are in City Heights, Lakeside, San Marcos and Valley Center. Markets in Carlsbad, Santee

and Escondido accept other government assistance programs, such as Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

Under the payment system at the market in City Heights, CalFresh participants can simply swipe their ATM-style benefits card (EBT) at a booth run by the farmers market operator to receive tokens that can be used to pay vendors. Vendors then return the tokens to the market operator in exchange for payment. To promote the use of CalFresh, City Heights is offering an additional \$5 in tokens when families use their EBT cards to purchase fresh produce at the market.

For more information on CalFresh and other food assistance programs, visit the CalFresh website at <http://www.calfresh.ca.gov/>. Additional information and prescreening are also available by calling 211 or visiting their website at: www.211sandiego.org.

Assistant Director
Todd Henderson
Director
David Estrella
Community Development
Department of Housing and
Chief Administrative Officer
Walter F. Ekard

Board of Supervisors
Greg Cox, District 1
Dianne Jacob, District 2
Pam Slater-Price, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
Bill Horn, District 5



Coordinator's Corner: Taking the Mystery out of the Escrow Account



One of the benefits to FSS participation is the Escrow Account, essentially a savings account, which can be a great tool for building assets. In an effort to serve you better, we'd like to take a moment to explain how the Escrow Account works and provide you with information on how to build an account of your own.

Your account will start to grow when your **earned** income is higher than what your earned income and total income was at the start of your contract, but why is that?

As you already know, if your income changes in any way you must contact your Housing Specialist within 14 days. At that time, your Housing Specialist will decide if your rent will also change. If your rent goes up due to an increase in earned income, a portion of your rent may be deposited into your escrow account. If your earned income decreases, then the deposits may be reduced until your earned income goes up again. **In short, the key to building your Escrow**

Account is to increase your earned income. You can do that by getting a pay raise, securing additional hours of work or obtaining employment.

At least once a year, the Housing Authority will inform you of the balance in your Escrow Account. In order to receive any funds that have accrued, you must graduate from the program by completing your goals, including independence from any kind of publically funded cash assistance program for the last 12 months of your participation.

If your contract is coming to a close and you have not built up escrow funds, don't worry! There still may be time to increase your earnings and begin to build an account.

While the rules remain the same, each case is different. Housing Specialists and the FSS team are available to give you more detailed information. If you have any questions about your Escrow Account or the FSS program, please contact us at (858) 694-8709.



Building Better Neighborhoods

County of San Diego
Housing & Community Development
Family Self-Sufficiency Program
3989 Ruffin Road
San Diego CA 92123

Phone: 858-694-8709

Fax: 858-514-6524

E-mail:

Deborah.Dyar@sdcounty.ca.gov
www.sdhcd.org